

I want to do two things. I want to require dramatic simplification on the part of State and local governments and require the collection of a tax that is owed on the part of remote sellers, and I want to extend the moratorium so that we don't have discriminatory and punitive taxes applied anywhere in the system, with Internet sellers, remote sellers, and so on.

I certainly am someone who works in the Commerce Committee with the Senator from Virginia. I am proud to do that. I believe technology is critically important to our country. It is an accelerator to the growth of our economy. There are a lot of important things that are happening with respect to technology. That is the reason I, too, am interested in extending this moratorium. That is why I offered the consent request last week, why I offer it today, and I will continue to offer it. It is my hope that others will continue to join me in trying to solve the second side of the equation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, this issue is foundational to the formation of our Republic. It is actually similar to what Patrick Henry talked about, taxation without representation. Obviously, the use taxes are to be collected by the States.

This is not a decision to be made by the States. If it were up to the States, obviously, they would be collecting and compelling retailers who do not have a physical presence in their State, who don't vote in their State, who do not receive any fire services, any police services, any services whatsoever from that State. If it were up to the States, for their convenience, they would be requiring them to collect and remit these taxes. This really becomes an issue of convenience for the tax collectors at a locality or at a State.

It is, as Senator DORGAN rightly stated, a decision for Congress to make. It does deal with interstate commerce. However, Congress, in all the decades this has been considered, has never said, before the Internet was even contemplated for use of communications or commerce or education, when people were more concerned about catalog sales, even then Congress said, no, we are not going to burden interstate commerce.

So that is the reason why Congress has never agreed. Now, the States and the localities can simplify. There is a ZIP code reported to me in the Denver, CO, area, that within that same code there are four different sales taxes applied to the very same product. I agree with Senator DORGAN that all of this ought to be simplified. I think if the States on their own, along with their subdivisions—counties, cities, or municipalities—worked to simplify, they will find many, especially the larger retailers that are from out of State, willing to comply as long as it is simplified and there is auditing, which is

logical, and they get a reasonable remittance back for collecting and sending in those sales taxes, as is accorded to most retailers within a State. Then I think you will find it all being handled in that regard.

Again, all of this is separate from the most pressing issue, which is these access taxes and discriminatory taxes which on Senator DORGAN and I would be in absolute agreement; we would not want to see more of them coming on, and there are many in effect now. Indeed, I am researching South Carolina, where the legislature has enacted a moratorium on State sales taxes on charges for Internet access effective from October 1998 through October 2001. Outside of this moratorium period, South Carolina can subject charges for Internet access to the State's sales tax. It may be automatic, by virtue of that law in South Carolina, that such taxes can be imposed even if the legislature may not be meeting. So for the most part I don't suspect many are going to be able to go to public hearings to get them done. But this is how this may be applying in South Carolina, unless the Governor said let's hold off on this and see what happens in Washington.

Mr. DORGAN. If the Senator will yield, I believe the Senator from Virginia raised the question of South Carolina. I am not familiar with that circumstance, but I think the Senator said South Carolina could, in fact, begin collecting. I don't know that he said they would or are collecting. I say this to the Senator. We will, in my judgment, extend the moratorium. When we do that, I will be willing to join him in extending it retroactively until October 22, 2001, to say to State and local governments: Beware, if you are thinking of messing around with public policy and taking advantage of a window when we extend this—and we will, in my judgment—Congress will intend to extend it retroactively to October 22. It is not unprecedented. I would be happy to join the Senator in sending that message if that is the message he would like to send. That resolves the issue he has just discussed.

Mr. ALLEN. I say to the Senator from North Dakota, I join with him. Although we have a contentious issue on some parts, we are in agreement there. I hope that message goes out to States and localities. Just because this has lapsed, please do not rush to tax the Internet access or impose discriminatory taxes.

I yield the floor.

#### EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until the hour of 5:15. For a brief explanation, some of the papers the two managers of the bill need are not readily available because of problems with the offices. They are trying to get them now.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, may I reserve 7 minutes out of that time?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I add to that request that Senator KENNEDY be recognized for 10 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts is recognized.

#### THE IRELAND PEACE PROCESS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, early this afternoon, my friend and colleague, Senator DODD, addressed the Senate about a very significant development that occurred today in the Northern Ireland peace process. I join him and so many others in the Senate, in the House of Representatives, and across the country in welcoming these developments. They are especially welcome at a time when we are still experiencing the dark emotions and feelings from the September 11 terrorist attacks that killed thousands. We have been further disturbed in recent days by the anthrax attacks that have taken the lives of dedicated public servants in this community.

In the midst of these tragic events, I welcome this opportunity to bring to the attention of my colleagues an historic breakthrough in the Northern Ireland peace process that occurred earlier today. This afternoon the IRA issued a statement indicating that it had begun the process of decommissioning its weapons. General de Chastelain, who chairs the international group responsible for overseeing the process, has confirmed that the decommissioning of some weapons has occurred. These actions are unprecedented in scope and are a watershed in the peace process that began a decade ago.

In 1994, after 30 years of violence, the IRA announced a historic cease-fire. That cease-fire led to the discussions, ably led by Senator Mitchell and strongly supported by President Clinton, which culminated in the 1998 Good Friday Peace Agreement. As a part of that visionary Agreement, commitments were made by the British and Irish governments and the political leaders on all sides of Northern Ireland to advance the peace process. Each party to the Agreement made important sacrifices to advance the common good and the process of peace.

The Agreement provided for a power-sharing local government and cross-border institutions. It called for dramatic reform of the police service in Northern Ireland to ensure that it would be representative of both communities. It called for equal treatment and equal opportunity for all in Northern Ireland. It called for a reduction in the presence of British troops and on all paramilitary organizations to decommission their weapons.

This bold and historic action by the IRA to decommission its weapons will